

Thank you, Representative *Garamendi*, and thanks for setting aside some time tonight to recognize this work by some great patriots. When I heard the news on Sunday, my thoughts turned immediately to those harmed by bin Laden's vicious attacks on our embassies, our ships, planes, the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and the many thousands of deaths caused by the havoc he sewed. Our hearts go out to those families.

Certainly in central New Jersey, we lost hundreds and hundreds of people on September 11, but we mustn't forget those who died in the embassies a couple of years before that, those who died in the wars that followed. Middletown, New Jersey, lost more people on September 11 than any other single town, except New York City. They went off to work, not understanding that this evil was at play, that Mr. Bin Laden was plotting just the most dastardly thing that you can imagine.

America's military and intelligence services demonstrated why they are known as the best in the world. Bin Laden's removal was of course not immediately the end of the threat of terrorism against the United States, but his death represents a crippling blow to the organization responsible for these many attacks over the last 13 years. It really is appropriate that we congratulate President Obama and the dedicated and brave members of our military and intelligence services for acting as they did.

The President showed that he understands intelligence efforts and military operations, and the Special Forces showed that they have skills and equipment like no others. The hunt for Zawahiri and other al Qaeda leaders will continue. I suspect that the information gathered in the assault on bin Laden this week will speed that search. I spent a number of years on the Intelligence Committee here in the Congress and learned a great deal about the dedication and skills of these people that work behind the scenes.

When the United States began its military campaign in Afghanistan nearly a decade ago, our goal was to bring to justice bin Laden and other al Qaeda leaders that were responsible for the attacks. It's worth noting that the senior most al Qaeda leaders have been captured or killed not in Afghanistan but in Pakistan. That fact only reinforces my conviction that the time has come for the United States to begin a swift and orderly withdrawal of our combat forces from Afghanistan, and I hope the President will heed the call of people all over the country and, I would say, all over the world to do precisely that.

As we celebrate the courage and the work of the Special Forces, we must also talk about the intelligence services, where they combine enormous skill and brain power and perseverance and, yes, courage. They are frequently only one intelligence leak away from losing all their work or sometimes their lives.

The fact that this has taken more than a dozen years since the bombing of the embassies to track down bin Laden and his evil operations emphasizes the need for full reliable cooperation with other countries, not intermittent sometime cooperation. It should have been, America would have wanted, the world would have wanted that this be completed sooner. So we need that international cooperation. This demonstrates it.

As Mr. *Clarke*, our colleague, points out though, the day-to-day protection of Americans won't be done by Special Forces. It will be done by courageous Americans who do the right thing day in and day out, our local first responders, the investigators. That's how most--in fact, nearly all of the potential terrorist attacks that have been beaten, undone, have been uncovered.

So this is sobering to think about what we have in front of us yet, but we know we have good people working on it. We saw that this past week, and we celebrate them and congratulate them and our leaders for carrying it out.

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If the gentleman would yield, I will add one more comment which is, I hope that this will bring the world closer together. The recognition that the killings, the evil worked by this man affected many thousands--really, hundreds of thousands around the world. I'm sure many of these people are grateful to families of those who have been killed in other countries, and so forth, are grateful for the actions of these brave Americans. But I hope that what this does is bring the countries of the world and the peoples of the world more closely together in fighting such evil.